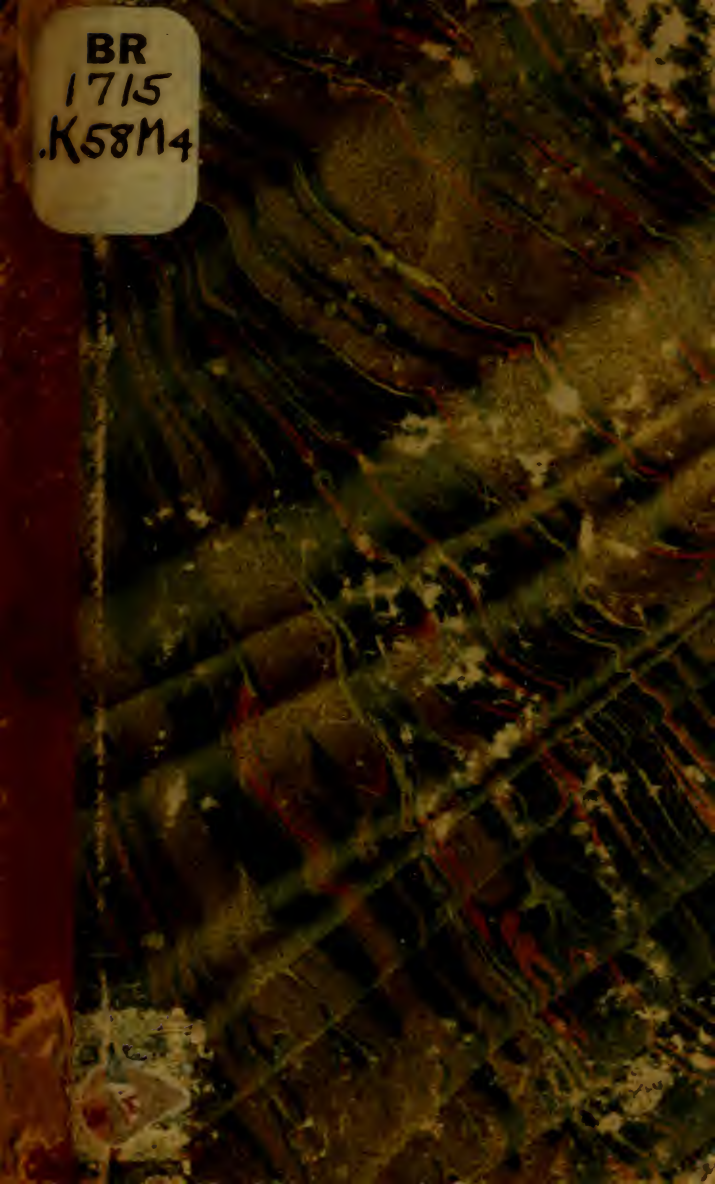
BR
1715
.K58M4



Acc 29
Def: for copy Right
by Paul: Beck

Library of Congress.
Chap. BR1715
Shelf .K58M4
Copyright No.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

4-3-66

306

View of the Hudson Highlands, from West Point.

MEMOIR

OF

JOSEPH AND MARY KINSLEY.

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."—MATT. xxi. 16.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1871
CITY OF WASHINGTON

Philadelphia:
AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,
146 CHESTNUT STREET.

c/836

BR 1715
.K58M4

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1836, by PAUL BECK, Jr., Treasurer, in trust for the American Sunday-school Union, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

2848

JOSEPH AND MARY KINSLEY.

CHAPTER I.

Joseph Kinsley was born at West Point, New York, on the 24th of October, 1828. He was a remarkably healthy child, and manifested a sweet and playful disposition in infancy, so that he became the favourite of the domestics and of the visiters to his father's family. There was something bold and striking in his early

character, which pleased and attracted the attention even of strangers. He was of a warm and ardent temper, though gentle and affectionate, and this disposition led him into errors which required considerable parental restraint and watchfulness.

He was taught his prayers as soon as he could speak distinctly, and to reverence the Supreme Being and holy things; and even before he could speak distinctly, when he observed his elder brother and sister kneeling at their mother's lap, he would kneel down also, and clasping his little

hands, try to repeat what they said.

He became a member of the West Point Sunday-school, when between two and three years of age; and scarcely ever missed one school the rest of his life, unless prevented from attending by bad weather. He was exceedingly fond of the Sunday-school. He was much attached to his teacher, and appeared to take great pleasure in complying with his directions for committing his lessons during the week. His little heart was touched and melted into tenderness, by his teacher asking

him (Joseph) to pray for him. He never forgot this to the day of his death, but would frequently and fervently pray, "God bless good Mr. ——," long after Mr. ——had ceased to be his teacher, and to reside at West Point.

His first exercises at Sunday-school were, to commit to memory, "Easy Questions for a little Child, with Answers in the Words of Scripture," by Mrs. Sherwood. At first he would learn one question and its answer a week, then two, till he completed this little book, which he knew to the day of his death. His next step was

to commit a portion of the Bible lesson. His parents, or elder brother or sister, would assist him in reading it over for the first time, and explain to him the meaning of the words which he did not understand. He never would repeat a word without knowing what it meant. Children, I am afraid, often repeat Scripture and hymns without caring whether they understand them or not. This is not pleasing to God, nor profitable to themselves. They should always ask their parents or friends to explain what they do not know

It was a rule in the family for all the children to commit one verse or more of their Sunday-school lesson every morning, so that when the Sabbath came round, their labour was accomplished without its being felt as a task. They generally knew their lessons by Saturday morning, and thus had the afternoon for recreation, without anxiety as to the morrow.

Saturday and Sunday evenings were usually devoted to sacred music. In this all the children delighted, and Joseph entered

into its enjoyment with all his soul.

In the course of his attendance on the Sunday-school, he committed to memory many hundred texts of Scripture and a great many hymns appropriate to his age. He retained and made use of what he thus learned, and would readily quote the texts to discountenance wicked practices which he observed in other boys, such as lying, stealing, swearing, and profanation of the Sabbath. "It is not right, is it, father? because God says, Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." And

this is the right way to learn Scripture; to make use of it in our lives and conversation.

His progress in acquiring other knowledge was equally satisfactory. He was particularly fond of geography and drawing, in both of which he made remarkable progress for one so young. The study of French he took up of his own accord as a mere pastime. He had gone through about one-third of an elementary book in this language, during the last year of his life.

Joseph was very cheerful, active, and good-natured. He was

fond of gardening; and a little spot he used to cultivate as well as he knew how to do it, will long be remembered by his parents. A little ever-green plant which he found in the mountains, and set out with his own hands in his garden, was to have been removed after his death to grow on his grave. But, on examining it, it was found that the severity of the winter had destroyed it.

Joseph was fond of innocent play and amusement, into which he entered heartily for the time. Many children, and grown persons too, think religion makes

people gloomy and sorrowful; but, so far is this from the truth, that they only who are truly religious can really enjoy this life.

He would not associate with naughty boys, and very often he would return home before the time of play was over, because some boy said a bad word, or was rude in his behaviour. He himself was exceedingly modest in his behaviour and appearance. Never in his life had he been known to make use of an immodest or naughty word; and such was his strict regard for

truth, that he was never known to tell a falsehood even in jest.

Decision was a remarkable trait in his character, and from his keen perception of right and wrong, he almost always acted rightly. No persuasion could induce him to do what he thought to be wrong. He was never more delighted than when he could make himself useful to his parents and others. Little boys sometimes think it hard to do an errand for father or mother, but nothing pleased Joseph more. Obedience to them was with him what it ought to be with all child-

ren, a religious principle; and he always complied with their commands with great cheerfulness.

He did not value his playthings very much; they might serve to amuse him for a moment, but that was all. His books, however, he preserved with great care, and often took great pleasure in displaying them to his parents, and brothers, and sisters, and in mentioning the names of those who had given them to him. He was generous and willing to share any nice little thing with his companions.

A more affectionate child ne-

ver lived. He would not leave the house on any account, to go to school or pay a visit, without embracing his father and mother; and always, when his father went out, Joseph would call, "Father, *let me kiss you good-by.*" And nothing could give him more pain than for his parents to refuse, or hesitate to gratify his wishes on such occasions, which was sometimes done when his conduct had not been strictly correct. As another evidence of his affection, may be mentioned the great care with which he preserved the letter his father was in the habit

of writing him on his birth-day. The following was found after his death, carefully wrapped up and put away among the little books he prized most.

West Point, Oct. 24, 1835.

My dear Son,—

This day you are seven years old; which is about one-tenth part of the time that our heavenly Father usually permits his children to stay in this world. But often, very often, he takes them to himself much sooner; and you know that very little children frequently die, and go into another state of existence. The Saviour

takes them into the kingdom of heaven, if good children; and so will he take you one of these days, if you continue to love and serve him here. God wishes you to be good and to do good. He sees you always. If you are ever tempted to commit wickedness, pray to God to give you strength, *the evil thought* to resist and drive away from your mind. Think right, and you will be pretty sure to act right. Live in peace with everybody. Be kind, affectionate, and gentle to all your companions; particularly to your brother and sisters. Obey your

mother, and love her: also your kind teacher, Mrs. W——, whom, I am sure, you will always remember with pleasure for the good instruction she has given you. We are all much pleased with you, and think that you get your lessons with great diligence.

Great men, such as governors, judges, ministers, &c., were once little boys; and like you, had to learn their a, b, c's, and to spell, read, and write. If your life is spared, as each succeeding birthday comes round, I hope you will grow wiser and happier, growing in grace as well as stature—in-

creasing in holiness as well as in knowledge.

A good name is better than great riches.

From your affectionate father.

Such parental efforts were productive of the happiest effects on Joseph. Like Legh Richmond, his father found that they formed a strong cord by which to bind him closer to those guides whom God had given to lead him to the fold of Christ.

There was no deception in Joseph. If he had committed a fault, he would not attempt to con-

ceal it. Conscious of integrity himself, he trusted without suspicion to the honesty of others. Still he was not credulous, for on hearing an extravagant story, he often showed his doubts by significantly asking, "*Is that really true?*"

He was of a forgiving disposition, and never felt malice against any one. When a companion or any person offends another, how often do you hear him say, "Never mind, sir, I'll be up with you;" meaning, I will do something to hurt you in turn. Not so with Joseph. One day

he was prevented from getting off to school with the rest of the children. When he went into the school-room, the children were engaged at play, which was against the rules; and just as Joseph had laid away his coat and hat, Mrs. W—— came in, and supposing that they were all concerned in the noise, punished him as well as the rest. On returning home, he told his father with tears in his eyes, that it was not fair to punish him; but said he, "Father, I suppose Mrs. W—— thought I had been there all the time." He was assured that it

was so; his tears were dried up, and Mrs. W—— enjoyed as much of his affection as ever.

His humility too was remarkable; he generally got his lesson well, and was often commended for his correct deportment; still he was not vain, and never seemed to think that he had done as much as he ought to have done.

Once he heard a lecture on faith at the Sunday-school. Some time afterwards a picture was given him which pleased him very much; the subject of it, however, was not proper. This he did not know, and when his father saw it, he

took it from Joseph, rolled it up and put it into the fire. "It is not a proper picture, my son." Joseph saw the flame kindle upon his picture and consume it, then turning to his father with a look of resignation, mingled with satisfaction—"That is faith, father, is it not?" "Yes, my son, your father does it for your good; and so our heavenly Father does all things for our good, though he does not always make the reason plain to our minds."

It was seldom necessary to correct Joseph on account of improper conduct, for the last three

mother's, in the neighbourhood of West Point. This was on the last Sabbath in March. Joseph and Mary attended the Sabbath-school, and said their lesson for the last time before they went to their grandmother's. On Monday morning Joseph took a long ride to his aunt's in the sleigh. He was very well and very happy. In the afternoon his father went to see his brothers and sisters. They were all very well to appearance, and inquired anxiously about their dear little sister Julia. All the children kissed their father when he left, and sent

their love to Julia. That evening, soon after bidding his father farewell in a state of perfect health, Joseph was taken ill. He was brought home in a sleigh on Tuesday morning, carefully wrapped up, but in a high fever. His father saw him immediately, and after a little preparation, asked Joseph if he would be afraid to die. He replied with great composure, "that he was not, and if it was God's will, he was ready to go to the Saviour." His father told him to put his trust in God; that the doctor would do all he could to make him well;

or four years of his life. Still improprieties were not allowed to pass unpunished. Punishment was never spared through mistaken tenderness to the child, but when necessary, was administered in a prayerful spirit, and care was taken to convince the child that its infliction gave greater pain to the parent, than to the child.

Joseph was fond of his Bible, the historical part particularly had great attractions for him. He knew the story of Joseph in Egypt by heart.

During the winter immediately

preceding his death, he improved exceedingly, and became a child of extraordinary promise. His parents fondly looked forward to the time when he should occupy a useful sphere in society as a preacher of righteousness, but their hopes were blasted; the Almighty had other work for their dear boy, far from the scenes of this life.

His little sister Julia was taken ill of scarlet fever in the latter part of March, 1836. As soon as the nature of her disease was known, her brothers and sisters were removed to their grand-

that he must be patient, and follow his directions in taking medicine. Joseph said that he would.

A bed was prepared for him in the same room where his little sister lay very sick. Joseph was here long enough to witness her dying agonies; she died in her grandmother's arms. She was a lovely little child, three years and six months old. She had just commenced learning to read on her Sunday-school card. One of the last lines she ever read, was this, "If I do not love God, I cannot go to Him." Her father explained to her what it

was to love God. "Well, father," said she, "I love God." She was warmly attached to her brother Joseph, and would frequently cry out in her illness, "Come, Joseph, come, Joseph." Her disease was very violent, and soon terminated her life.

Joseph's throat became quite sore, and though it was painful for him to swallow, yet he never hesitated to take all the drinks that were offered to him. When his fever increased in violence, he bore it with great resignation and patience. Part of the time he was deprived of his reason.

He was very often engaged in prayer, or singing the sweet little hymns which he had learned at Sunday-school. One of the last hymns he sang was a favourite of his, to the tune of Benevento, commencing, "Sinners turn, why will ye die," &c. It was called Joseph's hymn, because he always chose it when they sang in the family.—We have printed it at the end of the volume.

He would often ask for his brother Edward, and sisters Mary and Harriet, and seemed to think that he would die. On one occasion he asked his mother if

that was a good room to die in, and sometimes, when medicine was given to him, he would say, "It is of no use;" yet would take it cheerfully.

He was much attached to his sister Julia, and would frequently call her. At one time, waking from a delirious dream, "Father," said he, "sister Julia is here. I have almost caught her; but when I take hold of her, I cannot feel her." The night before he died, while his father was watching with him, observing that the light of the candle rested on his eyes, he removed it, lest it should in-

jure him. "Now, father," said he, "it is night, I will say my prayers and go to sleep;" and immediately got on his knees and said his evening prayers. The last prayer that he was heard to utter was in these words, "*O God, take thy poor little boy to thyself!*"

Great hopes were entertained that Joseph's strong constitution would not sink under the raging fever; but, on the fourth day of his illness, it was observed with grief, that his breathing was becoming difficult; and on Friday afternoon his parents saw, with

inexpressible anguish, that they must give him up. His disease terminated in croup, the fever left him: his countenance became tranquil and natural, and he lay partly on his grandmother's lap, supported by pillows, while he gently breathed out his spirit. His fine blue eye was calm, clear, and intelligent. He looked earnestly at his father, then at his mother, as if to say, "Good-by, father, good-by, mother;" and, finally, after fixing it for an instant, with a sweet smile, upon his grandmother, he turned it upwards toward heaven, and it closed in death.

Such was the end of Joseph. A sweet falling to sleep in Jesus, the happy portion of those only who put their trust in him. Of Joseph, it may truly be said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," for his last words were, "*O God, take thy poor little boy to thyself!*"

He died, Friday evening, 1st of April, 1836, aged seven years and a half.

CHAPTER II.

You have now read the account of Joseph's life and death. His sister Mary was a very gentle and amiable child, and had made good progress in her education. She had always been a regular attendant upon the Sunday-school. The same system had been observed in training up all the family; and Mary's character was a beautiful exhibition of the early fruits of piety. "Those that seek me early shall

find me," is a very precious promise, and ought to encourage Christian parents to lead their children to the Saviour.

Mary was taken sick the evening after Joseph's death, and was brought home the next day. Joseph was buried on Sunday, and when his father left her to attend his funeral, she asked if her mother was going also, and being assured that she was not, she appeared quite calm and resigned, though she had been exceedingly afflicted by the first news of his death.

She was not thought to be

dangerous for the first four days of her sickness, though she said that she should die. Speaking of her brother Joseph and sister Julia, she said, "Joseph and Julia shall not come to me, but I shall go to them, and that other dear little sister," that died early in the winter. She prayed very fervently for her father and mother, her remaining brother and sister, her uncles and aunts, and little cousins, mentioning many of them by name; for the doctor and his family, three of whose lovely children soon joined her in heaven,—for her school companions

and teacher, and all the world. Her prayer was very extraordinary for one so young; it came from the heart, and reached the hearts of all who heard it. Did not the Lord hear Mary's prayer?

She called her father and mother to her, embraced them tenderly, and kissed them very affectionately, and bade them farewell. She exhibited great emotion. It was thought that it arose from weakness and nervous excitement, as she was not thought to be in a dangerous state, but she appeared to know that the Lord had appointed a narrow

limit to her stay on earth. Her father attempted to soothe her by caresses, and calling her his darling daughter, and promising to do so many pleasant things for her when she got well: but it was not till he told her that he hoped she was a good child, and that the Saviour would fold her in his arms and take her to his bosom, that she became tranquil.

The hope of her recovery was disappointed. Shortly after this, her fever became violent. It affected her brain, and almost took away her reason. Remedies were applied which appeared to

afford relief; her life was prolonged for a day or two; but on Sunday morning, the 10th of April, she entered upon a Sabbath of eternal rest, without a struggle, a groan, or a pang, aged a little more than nine years.

Scarcely had Julia and Joseph been introduced to their heavenly home, before Mary was called to join them. Their bodies were buried in a beautiful valley on the banks of the Hudson, there to remain till *that day*, when this corruptible shall put on incorruptible, and this mortal shall put on immortality.

CHAPTER III

JOSEPH and MARY KINSLEY are beautiful examples of early piety. Joseph was my Sunday-school scholar, when I was a cadet in the Military Academy at West Point. There is no circumstance of my residence there, the recollection of which is so delightful, as the time spent with the dear boys of that class. Never shall I forget their affectionate attachment.

Should this little memoir fall

into the hands of any one who as yet knows nothing of the power of godliness, I would earnestly beseech you to consider *the evidence for the reality of religion* furnished by the life of Joseph. If this is not delusion—if the Bible be true—if there is a day of judgment—if there is, in truth, a heaven—a hell,—what is before you? Remember, you must stand *alone* before God. Learn therefore of Joseph how to live, that, like him, you may know how to die, and not be afraid of the judgment of the great day.

The Christian parent who reads

this narrative cannot fail to see another argument in favour of early religious instruction. The error is too common to defer this till the mind is maturer and vigorous. And then it is found, *when too late*, that Satan and the world have not exercised the same forbearance, but have most industriously sown the seeds of vice and iniquity.

But the parent who reads this memoir will also observe the excellent effect, on Joseph and Mary, of *systematic religious instruction.* It will not do to give the child a sermon on Sunday,

and then let Satan and the world have all the rest of the week at their own disposal. If you mean really to train up your child for God, it will require more attention and labour than this. Learn of the enemy in this respect. He is ever watchful to *improve little occasions.* He carefully fosters pride, stirs up anger, and suffers no opportunity to pass of inculcating his principles. As you are the appointed guardians of your child's eternal welfare, see that you are prepared at all times to meet your common enemy.

There is one thing in the me-

moir of Joseph, to which I would especially direct the attention of all those engaged in Sunday-schools. His father writes, "His little heart was touched and melted into tenderness, when his teacher asked him (Joseph) to pray for him. *He never forgot this to the day of his death:* but would frequently and fervently pray in simple language of his heart, 'God bless good Mr. ——,' long after Mr. —— had ceased to be his teacher, and to reside at West Point."

This little incident is full of instruction and encouragement. It

shows the duty of the Sunday school teacher to seek an interest in the scholars' prayers; and it encourages him to do so, not doubting but it will create another tie to unite him to his precious charge.

What a delightful consolation to know that children are supplicating the Saviour in your behalf, and that he regards them with peculiar affection! If then, you would have your labours blessed, not only pray for, and with your pupils, but urge them to pray for you.

And you, my dear young friend,

who may read the history of Joseph and his sister, I wish you to see how lovely a thing it is to seek the Lord in the days of your youth. Not only does religion make you a more obedient and affectionate child, a more kind and tender brother or sister, but it prepares you to join the holy angels in heaven, to live with them, and praise God for ever. But before you can be with them, you must die. It may be that you will die sooner than Joseph, who was not eight years old, or, perhaps, God may continue your life for a longer time. But then

he says, that before you die, you must prepare for heaven, or you can never live there. The only time to make this preparation is NOW. The reason why people generally are so afraid to die is, because they keep putting off the preparation which God requires until death comes, and then they feel the time so short, and dread so much to meet an angry God, that they become frightened and cannot prepare. But observe how sweetly these dear children, Joseph and Mary, fell asleep in Jesus. You know what the beautiful hymn says,—

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Death had no terrors for them, neither will it have for you, if, like them, you give your heart to God.

A gentleman, at the south, had an only daughter, and she became very sick. The doctor did every thing he could to make her well, but in vain. She grew worse and worse. At last the doctor told her father, that she must die. She asked her father what the doctor said, and when he told her that she would never get well,

she was very sorry.—"O, father," said she, "the grave is very dark, I am afraid to go into it alone—will you not go with me, father?"

"No, my dear child; God does not wish me to go down to the grave now." "Well, mother, will you not go with me?—the grave is very dark."

Her father explained to her that it was impossible for her mother to go with her. She turned over in the bed, and like good king Hezekiah, she prayed and wept. Before long she turned to her weeping parents, and with a sweet smile said, "O, father, I am not

afraid to go down to the grave, now—the Lord Jesus Christ will go with me."

So, my dear friend, if you weep for your sins and forsake them, and pray to Jesus, he will go with you into the dark grave. He has been there before you, and it will not be dark, when he is with you. He will say to you, "*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness.*"

JOSEPH'S HYMN.

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, your Maker, asks you why;
God, who did your being give,
Made you with himself to live;
He the fatal cause demands,
Asks the work of his own hands,
Why, ye thankless creatures, why
Will ye cross his love, and die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, your Saviour, asks you why?
God, who did your souls retrieve,
Died himself that ye might live.
Will you let him die in vain?
Crucify your Lord again?
Why, ye ransomed sinners, why
Will ye slight his grace, and die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, the Spirit, asks you why?
He who all your lives hath strove,
Woo'd you to embrace his love:
Will ye not his grace receive?
Will ye still refuse to live?
Why, you long-sought sinners, why
Will you grieve your God, and die?

Dead already, dead within,
Spiritually dead in sin:
Dead to God, while here you breathe;
Pant you after second death?
Will you still in sin remain,
Greedy of eternal pain?
O, ye dying sinners, why,
Why will ye for ever die?

THE END.

BR
1715

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 006 116 834 5